

Meeting memo

The Nippon Foundation, Mr. Jose Kawashima and the Mae Fah Luang Foundation

The Doi Tung Development Project, Chiang Rai, Thailand

27 March 2019

The Nippon Foundation (TNF) Myanmar Office has approached Mr. Jose Kawashima, President of Mi Cafeto Co., Ltd and Coffee Advisor of the Doi Tung Development Project (DTDP) for the consultancy on TNF's coffee extension effort in Myanmar. Having a concern that he has technical expertise in coffee but limited acquaintance with the local context of Myanmar and community mobilization, Mr. Kawashima has recommended that the Mae Fah Luang Foundation (MFLF), with its remarkable experience of alternative development in Myanmar, be a copartner in this potential collaboration. Therefore, the first visit of TNF to DTDP has been arranged during 25-28 March 2019.

The delegation of TNF spent the first couple of days exposing to various development activities and discussing with local leaders and older generations in DTDP. On 27 March 2019, the first meeting between TNF, Mr. Kawashima, and MFLF was held to exchange experience on development projects and discussed the prospect for collaboration.

Participants

Mi Cafeto Co., Ltd

- Mr. Jose Yoshiaki Kawashima President and CEO

TNF:

- Mr. Tatsuki NAKAJIMA Deputy Head Office Myanmar Liaison Office, Program Director
- Ms. Akane HARADA Program Manager
- Mr. Masaki NISHIKAWA Program Manager

MFLF:

- M.R.Disnadda Diskul Chairman
- M.L.Dispanadda Diskul CEO
- Ms. Visit-orn Rajatanarvin Director of Knowledge and Learning Centre
- Ms. Wipawa Chuenchit Programme Manager, Centre for Social Entrepreneurship

Mr. Nakajima firstly explained the two types of projects under TNF. Firstly, grant project, which is funded by TNF and implemented by other implementing agencies, i.e. other NGOs. Secondly, peacebuilding projects funded by Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by TNF.

Potential areas for collaboration with MFLF in Myanmar are identified as follows:

- **Kayin State** : Through the agreement from the central Government of Myanmar, Kayin State Government and KNU, TNF is having a grant project being implemented by partner Japanese NGO in a model village near Kawkareik Township called Lay Kay Kaw. Livelihood programs such as agricultural and livestock trainings are being offered to the target group including refugees, IDPs, and locally disadvantaged people. Tourist attractions are also being developed in the area to draw in Thai tourists from Mae Sot border. However, TNF's main concern right now is that management body of this village, i.e. KNU and IDPs are not willing to take charge of community mobilization yet.
- **Chin State** : This peacebuilding project funded by Japanese MOFA is currently in the project formulation process. TNF is looking for a partner with expertise in the areas of agriculture (mainly coffee production- by which Mr. Kawashima has been approached as a consultant), livestock, and water resource development. All these activities will be linked to market. The strong point of this area is the strong leadership of the Chin National Front (CNF), a local Ethnic Armed Group (EAO) who has good relationship with Chin State Government and is well connected with influential people inside and outside of Myanmar. CNF is also open to support from external parties but would prefer small-scale operation to ensure villagers have ownership over their lands, not large-scale development which will turn their lands into investors' hands. Japanese MOFA has been requested by NATALA to develop this area after ceasefire agreement.
- **Pa-O Special Region** : This area is currently not in the list of TNF yet. However, they are interested to partner with NATALA, PNLO and MFLF in this region since many EAOs are living in the surrounding villages of Pa-O.

M.R. Disnadda asked if TNF's projects are conditional and what the conditions are. Mr. Nakajima explained that their main focus is conflicted area and EAOs and the government should be willing to discuss about peace process. Thus, for TNF to collaborate with MFLF in the Pa-O region, verification with NATALA if the region is considered a conflicted area must be done first.

M.R.Disnadda and M.L.Dispanadda both emphasized that MFLF must be politically neutral and would not touch on politics. So MFLF has to be very careful if political perspective/element is involved.

Concerning the nature of the two project types, M.L.Dispanadda later pointed out that MFLF can play one of the following roles in TNF's mission in Myanmar:

Grant projects:

- Implementer. Currently, TNF is already partnering with a Japanese NGO in Kayin State.

Peacebuilding projects:

- Provide training courses and study visits on development-related topics including data collection and survey, water, livestock, agriculture, GPS & mapping.
- Consultancy service on project implementation and impact assessment.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Considering the geographical condition of Chin State which is very remote area, requiring 15 hours drive from Kale Airport and the fact that the project involved peace process, M.L.Dispanadda stated that it would be best for MFLF to play the role as a training ground for the locals to learn about development and agriculture, livestock, water or other topics of their interest. Mr. Kawashima also shared his opinion that up to now, coffee extension in the Chin State may not be economically viable due to its distance from the airport and major cities of Myanmar. The fact that all villages are very distant from one another is making it more challenging in terms of post-harvest management.

Upon their return to Myanmar, TNF will share what they learned from the Doi Tung Development Project with the Chairman and their project's stakeholders and will be in touch with MFLF for further discussion on collaboration, particularly whether the local stakeholders have a demand for training.